

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended): A method for managing ~~the a~~ transition between a ring ~~event~~ protection and a span ~~event~~ protection in a telecommunications network with a ring topology protected by a traffic protection mechanism in which signals arranged as byte frames are transmitted by nodes or network elements via spans of optical fibers connecting the network elements to form working channels and protection channels, the method comprising:

    sending suitable ring failure signals of said ring protection by the nodes or network elements of a span protected by adjacent to a said ring protection ~~failure~~;

    verifying that the protection channels of said span have been restored;

    maintaining ~~the said ring protection of said span for a ring event~~, for a predetermined time, when the verification is positive; and

    managing ~~the said ring protection event~~, as a said span protection for said span event, after said predetermined time.

2. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein in maintaining the ring protection for said span ring event for said predetermined time, the node adjacent to the ring ~~event~~ protection, seeing the ring ~~event~~ protection on the working channels, activates a timer inside of said node.

3. (currently amended): The method according to claim 2, wherein managing the ring ~~event~~protection, as ~~a~~the span ~~event~~protection, is not started before the expiration of said timer.

4. (currently amended): A ring network element capable of managing the transition between a ring ~~event~~protection and a span ~~event~~protection in a telecommunications network with a ring topology protected by a traffic protection mechanism in which signals arranged as byte frames are transmitted, said ring network comprising:

nodes or network elements; and

spans of optical fibers connecting the nodes or network elements to form the ring network via working channels and protection channels, wherein the nodes or network elements further comprise:

means for generating and sending suitable ring failure signals of said ring protection;

means for verifying that the protection channels have been restored on said span;

means for maintaining the ring protection of said span ~~for the ring event~~, for a predetermined time, when the verification is positive; and

means for managing the ring ~~event~~protection of said span, as a span ~~event~~protection, after said predetermined time.

5. (currently amended): The network element according to claim 4, wherein said means for maintaining the ring protection—~~for the ring event~~, for said predetermined time, comprises a timer inside the network element.

6. (previously presented): A computer program comprising computer program code means adapted to carry out the method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 when said program is run on a computer.

7. (previously presented): A computer-readable medium having a program recorded thereon, said computer-readable medium comprising program code means adapted to carry out the method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 when said program is run in a computer.